

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 AF-08 EA-07 NEA-10 OES-06 INT-05 OIC-02
AGRE-00 EB-07 SAB-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /124 W
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R 102350Z JAN 77
FM USMISSION USUN NY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1991
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION OECD PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 0060

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UN, SENV
SUBJ: WORLD WATER CONFERENCE: POLITICAL ISSUES

REF: USUN 0054 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: WHILE THE WORLD WATER CONFERENCE PREPARATORY PROCESS HAS TO THIS POINT BEEN RELATIVELY FREE OF POLITICAL DEBATE, THIS CANNOT BE COUNTED ON DURING THE CONFERENCE ITSELF WHICH IS NOW ONLY 10 WEEKS AWAY. A NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS, IN CORRIDORS OR ELSEWHERE, HAVE STAKED OUT CLAIMS TO RAISE LOCALIZED POLITICAL ISSUES, AND THEREFORE THE U.S. DELEGATION SHOULD BE WELL PREPARED WITH CONTINGENCY GUIDANCE ON A WIDE RANGE OF POLITICAL ISSUES. USUN FURTHER SUGGESTS THAT THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDER ADVANCE BILATERAL ACTION ON A FEW SPECIFIC BILATERAL ISSUES, ESPECIALLY PANAMA. END SUMMARY.

2. USUN HAS REPORTED IN REFTEL ON THE RESULTS OF THE FUNAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE WORLD WATER CON-
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ERENCE, SCHEDULED IN MAR DEL PLATA, ARGENTINA. FROM MARCH 14-25, 1977. THE DEBATE THROUGHOUT THE PREPARATORY PROCESS AND AT THIS LAST PREPARATORY MEETING HAS BEEN RELATIVELY LOW-KEYED AND SUBSTANTIVE. DURING THE JANUARY 3-7 MEETING IN NEW YORK, NO DELEGATION RAISED EXPLICITLY SENSITIVE POLITICAL ISSUES. A NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS, MOSTLY WESTERN EUROPEAN BUT

ALSO VENEZUELA, EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT EXTRANEIOUS, LOCALIZED POLITICAL ISSUES WOULD NOT BE RAISED OR EXTENSIVELY TREATED AT THE CONFERENCE. WHILE A RECORD OF DISUASION HAS BEEN BUILT WITH REGARD TO THE INTRODUCTION OF HOTLY CONTESTED POLITICAL ISSUES, THIS POSITIVE BACKDROP CANNOT BE COUNTED ON DURING THE CONFERENCE ITSELF. IN FACT, A NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS, IN THE CORRIDORS OR ELSEWHERE, HAVE LAID THE GROUNDWORK FOR INTRODUCING LOCALIZED POLITICAL ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO THEM. WE HAVE TALKED TO THE WATER CONFERENCE SECRETARY GENERAL MAGEED (SUDAN) ABOUT THE MOST LIKELY CANDIDATES FOR POLITICAL DEBATE AND HAVE SET FORTH BELOW SEVERAL SUCH ISSUES. THE LIST, HOWEVER, IS BY NO MEANS EXHAUSTIVE.

3. THE PANAMA CANAL: OUR EXPERIENCE AT THE ECLA MEETING IN LIMA LAST SEPTEMBER SUGGESTS THERE IS A REASONABLY STRONG PROBABILITY THAT PANAMANIAN WILL FIND SOME MEANS TO RAISE THIS ISSUE UNLESS WE DO SOMETHING BEFORE THE CONFERENCE TO STOP THEM. THE NEW ADMINISTRATION MAY WANT TO CONSIDER INCLUDING THE WATER CONFERENCE AS ONE OF THE TOPICS ADDRESSED IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS ON HOW NEGOTIATIONS WILL PROCEED ON THE CANAL.

4. THE ARGENTINA-BRAZIL, PARANA RIVER DISPUTE: THIS ISSUE HAS LOOMED IN THE BACKGROUND OF THIS CONFERENCE SINCE ITS INCEPTION. ARGENTINA, AS CONFERENCE HOST, WILL PRESUMABLY MAKE EVERY EFFORT CONFIDENTIAL

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TO AVOID CONFRONTATION AND THERE IS A REASONABLE PROBABILITY THEY WILL SUCCEED IN COOLING THEIR NEIGHBOR.

5. THE INDIA-BANGLADESH, FARRAKA BARRAGE DISPUTE: BANGLADESH CAME CLOSEST TO DIRECTLY SURFACING A POLITICAL ISSUE DURING THE PREPARATORY MEETING. ONE OF THEIR THEMATIC PAPERS DEALS WITH THIS SUBJECT. THEY ALSO TOOK ACTION IN THE CORRIDORS TO BRING THIS MATTER TO THE ATTENTION OF OTHER DELEGATIONS, AND THERE IS A HIGH PROBABILITY THEY WILL RAISE THIS MATTER AT MAR DEL PLATA.

6. JORDAN-ISRAEL MAGARIN DAM DISPUTE: THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JORDAN ON JORDAN RIVER DEVELOPMENT WERE NOT BROACHED AT THE ECWA MEETING IN DECEMBER 1976, PRIMARILY BECAUSE JORDAN DID NOT ATTEND. PERHAPS THE PRIMARY CONCERN AT THE CONFERENCE IS THAT SOMEONE (SUCH AS THE PLO) MAY

SURFACE THIS ISSUE, FORCING JORDAN TO TAKE A STRONG STANCE.

7. IRAQ-SYRIA: THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS THAT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THESE TWO ARAB COUNTRIES WITH REGARD TO THE EUPHRATES RIVER COULD COME OUT AT MAR DEL PLATA. AS FAR AS WE KNOW, THIS WOULD BE ONE OF THE FIRST TIMES ARAB COUNTRIES HAD PUBLICLY DISPUTED AN INTER-ARAB ISSUE AT A WORLD CONFERENCE; HOWEVER, WE ASSUME THEREFORE THAT THE ARABS WILL TRY TO KEEP THIS ONE QUIET.

8. GREECE-TURKEY: THE WATER CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT TELLS US THAT IT HAS RECEIVED AN "OBSCURE" TURKISH COMMUNICATION WITH REGARD TO THE WATER SITUATION ON CYPRUS. UP TO THE PRESENT, THE SECRETARIAT HAS IGNORED THE COMMUNICATION. (BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY CONFIDENTIAL

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WERE MEMBERS OF THE PREPCOM BUT NEITHER PLAYED AN ACTIVE ROLE.)

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9. MYERSON'S CONVERSATION WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE (MAGEED) ALSO INCLUDED DISCUSSION WITH REGARD TO THE INTEREST OF REPRESENTATIVES IN A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES TYPE DOCUMENT. MAGEED INDICATED THAT, WHILE HE FELT SOME STATEMENT OR DECLARATION ON WATER RESOURCES POLICY OPTIONS WOULD PROBABLY BE NECESSARY TO REFLECT DISCUSSIONS ON THIS AGENDA ITEM (POLICY OPTIONS), HE DID NOT SEEK OR FAVOR A "DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES" DOCUMENT ALONG THE LINES PRODUCED AT HABITAT, WHICH HAD BEEN THE CAUSE OF SO MUCH POLITICAL HEAT.

10. RECOMMENDATION: THE U.S. DELEGATION IN MAR DEL PLATA SHOULD BE ARMED WITH CONTINGENCY GUIDANCE ON A WIDE RANGE OF POLITICAL ISSUES. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE GIVEN THE LIMITED TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES LOKELY TO BE AVAILABLE. WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN ISSUES, ESPECIALLY THE PANAMA CANAL, THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER TAKING DISCREET BILATERAL ACTION IN ADVANCE IN AN EFFORT TO HEAD OFF

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ANY MAJOR POLITICAL CONFRONTATION. WE RECOGNIZE THE FACT THAT THE U.S. WILL WANT TO PRESERVE ITS NEUTRALITY ON BILATERAL DISPUTES IN WHICH WE ARE NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED, BUT QUIET SOUNDINGS MIGHT BE INDICATED IN A FEW CASES (E.G. GREECE AND TURKEY), IF ONLY TO REDUCE THE RISK OF SURPRISES.
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